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By Sherece Spain

CELEBRATING

Christmas

in Europe



Christmas is an internationally celebrated holiday. However, many countries and cultures have their own distinct ways to commemorate this time of the year. In Europe, it is definitely a whole season filled with celebration. There are different traditions that aren't as popular in America.



Christmas Eve

For many Europeans, the main event is on the 24th. People will go to church that evening or at midnight. Afterward, families will gather for their celebratory meal, which is usually some type of fish or a goose. They'll continue to honor and celebrate the holiday through Dec. 26, so most businesses are closed Dec. 25 and 26.

"Happy Christmas"

We're used to saying Merry Christmas. However, in many European languages, it's translated as Happy Christmas - our British friends included (no translation required).

Christmas trees and decorations

Most Europeans don't put up their tree until Christmas Eve. It usually stays up until Epiphany, not just after New Year's Day, which is common in the U.S.

You also won't see much in the way of illuminated decorations as you drive through neighborhoods. However, nativity scenes and the lit paper lantern stars are quite popular. Some larger cities have annual light displays. If you need your fix of Christmas lights, that's the place to go!

Season beginning

No, it's not Black Friday. It does vary by country; however, the top three are St. Nicholas Day on Dec. 6, Christmas Eve, or the beginning of Advent.

The "bad" kids

The possibility of a lump of coal did not serve as much of a deterrent as my parents probably would've liked. However, Krampus totally has the potential for keeping a kid on the straight and narrow. He's the scary looking fellow who goes around with Santa Claus. If you're good, you get presents. If you're bad, you get abducted! I don't know who came up with this twisted idea, but it's pretty awesome.

Christmas markets

Dating back to medieval times, this allowed locals to bring their handcrafted goods to market. People could get all their shopping done in one location without having to travel great distances for unique gifts and holiday decorations. With the music, small fires and mulled wine, you can't help but get in the holiday spirit.

Boxing Day

This began in the U.K. in the Middle Ages. Alms boxes were put out to collect money for the poor. On Dec. 26, the boxes were opened, usually by the church, and the contents were distributed to the less fortunate. Today, it's somewhat more of the equivalent to America's Black Friday.

Shoes instead of stockings

Traditionally in several countries, children place shoes by the fireplace or door. They will put in offerings to St. Nicholas or his animals in exchange for the presents he brings.

Epiphany

Also called Three Kings' Day, is a feast day in January to celebrate when the Kings visited baby Jesus. It often times includes caroling and having one's house blessed along with another big, festive feast. Since this is the official end of the Christmas season, you start to notice decorations come down.

If you plan on spending Christmas in your host nation or traveling to another European country, try incorporating some of their traditions into your festivities. I'm not allowed to include Krampus, but food and markets are at the top of my list.

Frohe Weihnachten! ¡Feliz Navidad!

Bon Natale! Buon Natale!



11

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Photo Opportunities

By Jessica Zen



One of the most exciting parts about the weather turning cold in Germany is the growing anticipation for the Christmas markets (*Christkindlmarkt*). Finding unique gifts or the most ostentatiously decorated Christmas tree is part of the fun of the hunt. Social media is also very important to market goers and getting the perfect picture is just as crucial as drinking *Glühwein* at every opportunity. Here are 11 quirky Christmas market photo-ops to take your Instagram feed to the next level.

- 1 Photo with the seasonal *Glühwein* or holiday mug. This should be simple, as *Glühwein* is served at every single market.
- 2 Snap a pic with a camel or other live manger animals that make a guest appearance.

- 3 Smile big next to the most massive Christmas tree you can find covered in lights, tinsel and ornaments.
- 4 Point to the entrance sign or arch to the market. It's also essential so that you can document which market you are attending.
- 5 Take a selfie with the Christmas pyramid/candle carousel. Who can find the biggest one?

continued on page 8





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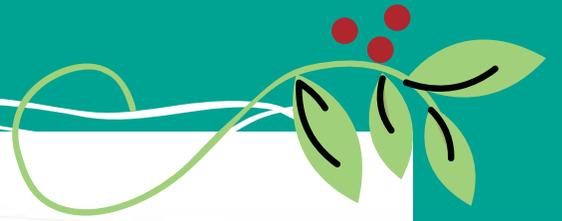
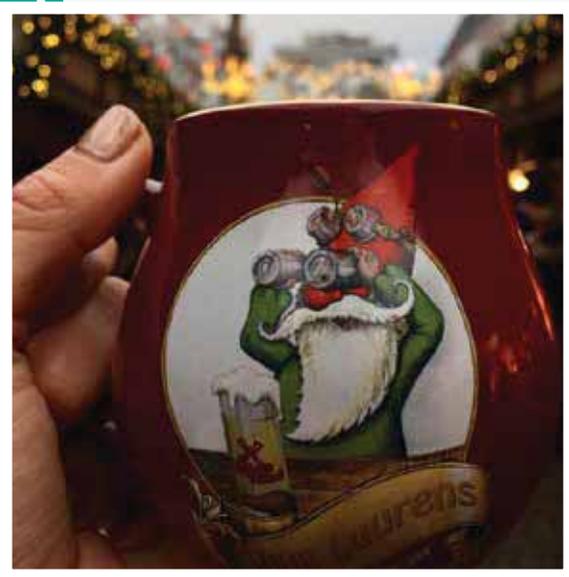
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- 6 Fill your camera roll with some sort of *wurst* sandwich. It's almost impossible to leave a market without eating one.
- 7 Photo with your favorite/most unique handmade ornament.
- 8 Say cheese with the manger scene.
- 9 A picture while you take a bite out of *lebkuchen* (gingerbread cookies).
- 10 Photo with your crew; because who goes to the market alone?
- 11 Take a picture of chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Bonus points for a video channeling your inner Nat King Cole.

Can you get all 11 photos taken at one market? Find your favorite location and be on the lookout for these fantastic opportunities to inspire others to visit these winter wonderlands. You'll end up capturing memories that will last a lifetime, and hopefully some seriously outstanding selfies. Happy Holidays! ■



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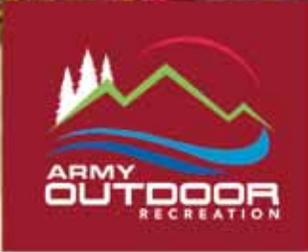


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LEIPZIG CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 1 | DECEMBER 16

Leipzig Christmas Market dates back to 1458. With more than 250 twinkling stalls located in the historic town center, the Leipzig Christmas Market is not only one of the oldest, but also one of the largest Christmas markets in Germany. Traditionally, the main area of the Christmas Market is on the Marktplatz (market square), where visitors will be amazed at a Saxon spruce Christmas tree more than 65ft high and enjoy a variety of performances at the market square stage. Leipzig also has a traditional Finnish village with food and traditional Finnish sweaters, coats and crafts.

Price: €35/adult, €28/child 3-12, €12/child under 3

ROTHENBURG CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 2 | DECEMBER 22

There is a city in Germany where Christmas can be experienced all year long! Rothenburg ob der Tauber, located directly off of the famous Romantic Road in Bavaria, is also home to one of the most charming Christmas markets in Germany. Be sure to walk on the city walls and shop at the enchanting Kathy Wohlfahrt Christmas store. A climb up the city hall tower will provide you an impressive view of this fascinating city. Visitors can also take horse and buggy rides with their children and enjoy the view.

Price: €35/adult, €28/child 3-12, €12/child under 3

DRESDEN CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 8

The traditional Christmas Market in Dresden, with its romantic and festive charm is an inspiration in itself, a real treasure trove for traditional handmade crafts. There is a little something for everyone: Christmas pyramids, smoking figures and candleholders from Erzgebirge Mountains, indigo-dyed printed textile products and pottery from Lusatia, gingerbread from Pulsnitz, filigree lace products from Plauen, Herrenhut Advent stars, blown glass tree decorations from Lauscha, and of course specialties from Dresden itself, such as the traditional 'Pflaumentoffel', a chimney-sweep figure made of dried prunes. Visitors can also watch the carvers, glass-blowers and bakers in action at the crafts market.

Price: €49/adult, €39/child (3-12), €12/child under 3

PRAGUE CHRISTMAS MARKET* DECEMBER 9

Visit the Golden City of Europe and celebrate Christmas a little early with one of Europe's most beautiful markets! In addition, tour the historic part of town to see famous sights, including the Astronomical Clock and the Charles Bridge. If time permits, walk to the castle and discover the cathedral. Most of the roads are cobblestone, so please wear comfortable shoes.

Price: €49/adult, €39/child 3-12, €12/child under 3

MUNICH CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 15 | DECEMBER 23

Munich's Christmas Market, dating back to the 14th century, is held on the Marienplatz in the heart of the city center. Back then, just like today, the Munich Christmas Market offers traditional Bavarian and unique Christmas gifts, including wood carvings from Oberammergau, gingerbread (Lebkuchen) from Nuremberg, and notably some exquisite glassware from the Bavarian Forest. A variety of Christmas markets are spread throughout Munich, such as the Tollwood and Medieval Christmas Markets.

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VIENNA CHRISTMAS MARKET, AUSTRIA* DECEMBER 1

Vienna has several amazing Christmas Markets, all known to be some of the most inviting in all of Europe. Come browse the markets of the Rathausplatz, Schoenbrunn Palace, Karlskirche, Spittelberg and several other quaint spots. Visitors can also watch the glassblowers and bakers in action at the craft booths. Maps of Vienna and Christmas Markets provided along with transportation to Austria. Price: \$99/adult, \$59/child under 12

ERLANGEN CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 6

Erlangen is a university city in the metropolitan region of Nuremberg, which happens to be the world headquarters of many internationally known corporations. This multi-cultural city has two fantastic Christmas Markets: one in traditional flair, and the other following a medieval theme. Both are within a short walking distance from one another. Additionally, an outdoor ice skating rink is located directly next to the Christmas Markets and may be used at the customer's expense. Price: \$25/person

LAUSCHA CHRISTMAS MARKET DECEMBER 13

Discover the birthplace of the modern glass Christmas tree ornament in Lauscha! See demonstrations of glass blowing, visit a plethora of glass boutiques and observe the emergence of the famous Christmas tree decorations while strolling through the artisan village area in central Lauscha.

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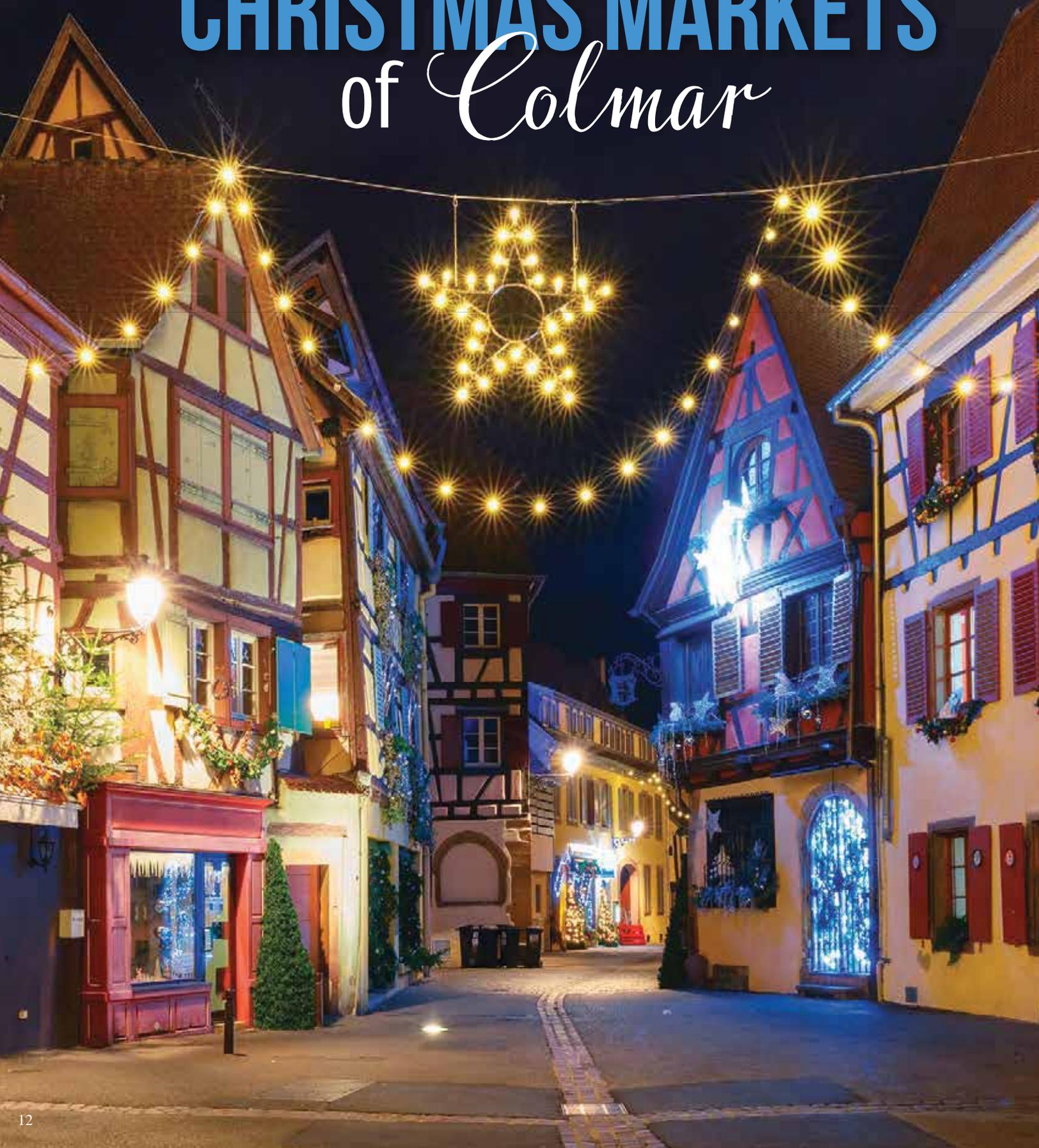
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Visit the CHRISTMAS MARKETS of Colmar

By Mary Del Rosario





Located in northeastern France is the striking town of Colmar. The Alsatian town, teeming with cobblestone streets, half-timbered medieval buildings, Gothic churches and quaint shops is a town made to inspire fairytales. However, wrap some warm, yellow Christmas lights on the tree, gussy-up windows with twinkling stars, decorate festive food huts and Colmar becomes the picture-perfect Christmas backdrop that even the late Thomas Kinkadee would have liked to paint. If you're like me and need to celebrate many days before the most wonderful time of the year, head to the Colmar Christmas Market, a beguiling market chock-full of holiday glee.

THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Because Christmas in Colmar is an occasion not to be missed, the town has five festive markets that house their own kind of holiday spirit. From Nov. 23 to Dec. 30, over 180 stalls of handmade crafts, holiday novelties, hot cocoa and other delightful festival goodies will have you humming to the tune of "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas." The magic of Colmar's markets is that they offer fun for every taste and age!

Place des Dominicains - Considered to be the dominating market, this area is home to the Dominican Church that dates back to the early 14th century. 60 huts gather together to create a warm and welcoming feeling of all things Christmas just outside this church. Festive meals and drinks call families and friends to enjoy a memorable time together.

Place de l'Ancienne Douane - This historic square located in the heart of the old city hosts around 50 little stalls dotted around the Schwendi Fountain. The market is set up on both sides of the Lauch River and contemporary creations along with traditional Christmas decorations can be found here.

Place Jeanne d'Arc - A recreation of the traditional Alsatian village, find local products and delicious foods such as *foie gras*, biscuits, cold meats and of course, wine! Bring your favorite foodie along as they would be sure to appreciate this market!

La Petite Venise - A child's haven, this market is devoted to children complete with 43 colorful cottages filled with treasures only Santa and

his elves could have invented. Be sure to also take them to see the beautiful nativity scene and have them ride the horses on the carousel! Children can sip on their own *vin chaud* (mulled wine) with some warm apple juice. Before leaving, have your young ones drop a letter to Santa in the market's giant mailbox.

The Koïffhus - Set in a 14th and 15th century-old building, the market at the Koïffhus focuses on the trade aspect. For example, you will find stands from master glaziers, cabinet makers, wood sculptors, jewelers, booksellers and antique sellers.

Know before you go

- When heading to these markets, be sure to bring plenty of euros as many vendors will not accept card.
- To ensure a less stressful way of commuting, public transportation is the best.
- Participate in guided tours to see all the memorable Colmar market highlights.
- Get your hands on *Bredele*, bite-sized biscuits made in the Alsace region. These delectable goodies include almond, honey or lemon flavor.

Things to see outside the market

Apart from the famous Christmas market, Colmar offers many activities and sights to enjoy. From the food to the museums, having a memorable time in this beautiful French town won't be hard to accomplish!



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For the history buffs, head to the Musée d'Unterlinden, a museum that hides a prized medieval stone statue collection. However, the star is the late Gothic Retable d'Issenheim by painter Mathias Grunewald.

Want to experience a taste of Venice? Stroll along Little Venice or the Quartier de la Krutenau, just past the Rue Saint-Jean. The stunning neighborhood possesses delicious canal-side restaurants, quaint bridges and colorful half-timbered houses which make it known as "Little Venice" due to the fact that these houses were built on the edge of the Lauch River canal.

Though Christmas market goodies are irresistible, sometimes one has to try scrumptious French food, so try Atelier du Peintre, a well-raved French restaurant on rue Schongauer. From *foie gras* to grilled scallops, your taste buds will not be disappointed! This restaurant has an elegant flair so be sure to dress appropriately and expect prices to be on the higher end. When in France, right?

Things to do nearby

Ribeauvillé - Just a 25-minute drive away from charming Colmar, this village was one of the two places that inspired the village in *Beauty and the Beast*. Feel like Belle as you wander and get lost in the cobblestoned streets. During your wandering, stop by Auberge du Parc Carola, an international restaurant that's quaint on the outside, but is a foodie's paradise on the inside. Famous chef Michahela Peters serves one-of-a-kind dishes such as roe deer with spiced red cabbage and Alsatian wild boar tart with Granny Smith apples.

Riquewihr - North of Colmar, you'll find the attractive village of Riquewihr, the second of



the two villages that inspired the Disney classic. Aptly named one of the most beautiful villages in France, soak in the view of the hills and shop at the many boutiques. The historic buildings are well preserved and medieval and Renaissance elements can be seen from the houses and historic buildings. While here, don't miss the Castle of the Dukes of Württemberg, a 16th-century castle which boasts many elements of medieval history. For a jaw-dropping view of the region, head to the Château de Saint-Ulrich, one of three castles that overlook Ribeauvillé.

This holiday season, enter a jolly world filled with festive lights, colors of red, yellow and green, and a sense of community belonging to Colmar. At the Colmar Christmas market, the spirit of giving comes alive and Christmas has never felt more real. May your cups be filled with endless amounts of *vin chaud* and your hearts be filled with Christmas cheer! ■





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The Christmas Markets of MAINZ & WIESBADEN

By Mary Del Rosario



Lights twinkling above the beloved holiday stands, the *Tannenbaum* (Christmas tree) adorned with red and gold ornaments, the aroma of roasted chestnuts filling the air and a cup of *Glühwein* warming up your cold, almost numb hand — nothing puts us more in a holly, jolly mood than Germany’s famous Christmas markets. The Mainz and Wiesbaden Christmas markets in particular know just how to transform even the Scrooges into Buddy the Elf.

MAINZ CHRISTMAS MARKET

Creating an atmosphere that can only be described as magical and festive, the Mainz Christmas market is set in the historical area of the city’s 1000-year-old St. Martin’s Cathedral. One hundred jovial and brightly lit stands blanket the city and provide opportunities to do some last-minute Christmas shopping or even buy souvenirs for loved ones back home.

Speaking of shopping, head to Kirschgarten, Mainz’s historic city center, which is thoughtfully decorated in all things Christmas and alit with beautiful lights. Also, be sure not to miss the 11-meter high Christmas pyramid upon entering the market as well as a hand-carved, life-sized nativity scene in front of Gotthard Chapel of St. Martin’s Cathedral. In this cathedral, several concerts will be performed.

Considered to be the traditional cultural event, the Staatstheater Mainz will also perform a Christmas spectacle that even Santa will be proud of!

In front of the printing shop of the Gutenberg Museum, the *Mainzer Weihnachstdorf*, or Christmas village, provides an option for a large group to gather around in a Christmas barrel and hut surrounded by a festive campfire. Be sure to reserve early as there is a high demand.

To see more Christmas festivities sprinkled in Mainz, head to the Schillerplatz and Neubrunnenplatz to enjoy Christmas décor, lights and an overall joyous spirit.

Know before you go

- Public transportation is best, especially if you have plans to eat, drink and be merry... with

Glühwein. The Christmas market can be reached via the Mainz public transport company (MVG).

- Dress appropriately and bundle up! Being out in the cold for several hours will have you feeling like Frosty the Snowman so be sure to invest in warm gloves and layer up!
- As a gift, the city offers parking hours and you can receive a parking voucher at several shops in the city center, depending on your purchases at these shops.

Things to see outside the market

Aside from the famous cathedral where the market takes place, Mainz is also home to the Gutenberg Museum which commemorates Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of the printing press.

If you're a fan of the Roman history, check out the Museum of Ancient Seafaring where well-preserved remains of Roman war ships are waiting for their story to be told.

Haven't had your fill of welcoming this joyous season? The Wiesbaden Christmas market, just 22 minutes away from Mainz, lets you spread Christmas cheer even more!



WIESBADEN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Known as The Twinkling Star Christmas Market, or *Sternschnuppenmarkt*, Wiesbaden knows how to make the Yuletide gay and get us excited for that special day in December. The market, which opens on November 27, is located on the Schlossplatz between the Rathaus and the Stadtschloss. This market is highly raved that it was voted "No. 1" in recent years. With colorfully lit stages, Christmas décor that looked like Santa's elves had done the job and friendly vendors, it's not hard to see why. Don't forget to marvel at their unique display of over seventy 10-meter high blue and golden lit lilies coming to life above the Schlossplatz!

Seeing colorful Christmas lights should be admired from up above as well, so head to the platform of the Market Church to see festive lights and holidays displays. From here, you can even see Frankfurt's skyline!

The Wiesbaden Ferris wheel also provides its guests with a fantastic view of the illuminating and jolly market.

If the young ones are eager to try ice skating, head to the ESWE-Eiszeit, an ice skating rink at the Warmer Damm which is a mere 6-minute walk from the market is only. At this rink, two Alpine chalets will also be provided to accommodate small and large functions, perfect for entertaining groups of friends.

Know before you go

- Originating from nearby Frankfurt, try *Bethmännchen*, marzipan decorated with almond slices.
- At 9 a.m., 12 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., you can enjoy listening to German Christmas carols in the tower of the Market Church



- To sound like a local, wish Germans a "*Frohe Weihnachde und e guude Rudsch.*"
- Tour the famous market with a short walking tour that hits all the major market highlights. These tours are available on Fridays and Saturdays at 3 p.m. and costs 7 euros per person.

Things to see outside the market

The capital of Hesse offers fun activities other than its beautiful Christmas markets so explore Wiesbaden's main spa building known as the Kurhaus. This neoclassical building has many Art Nouveau touches which can be seen in the glass dome.

A Russian Orthodox church is a rare sighting in Germany, but the Neroberg makes it seem as if you were in Russia with its ornate golden onion dome. Inside the church, you can view the Grand

Duchess Elizabeth Mikhailovna, wife of Duke Adolf of Nassau's tomb.

If your children enjoy the zoo, treat them to the Tier und Pflanzenpark Fasanerie. The hunting lodge, built in the 1740s, also houses a restaurant as well as exotic specimens such as Spanish fir, the thickest sequoia in Germany and of course, wild boar, barn owls and other creatures.

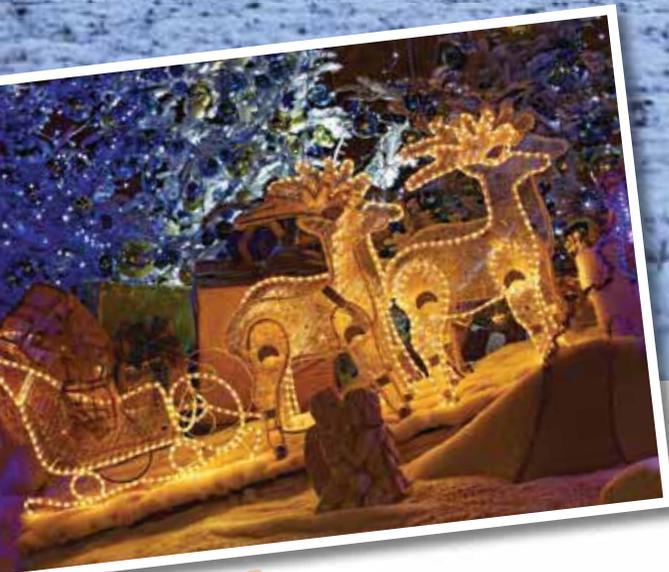
This Christmas season, take part of the magic that German Christmas markets offer. The markets are not only there to sell spiced mulled wine, *Lebkucken* and presents, but it gathers us as a community to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. Frohe Weihnachten! ■

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The Christmas Markets *of* **STUTTGART** & **ESSLINGEN**

By Jessica Zen



Glistening lights, stalls lovingly styled with their finest Christmas decor, a children's wonderland and so much more await you at the Christmas and Medieval Markets in Stuttgart and Esslingen this year. Bust out your warmest footwear and load up the family for these fantastic markets in Germany!

STUTTGART CHRISTMAS MARKET

The annual Stuttgart Christmas Market, *Weihnachts Markt*, draws over 3.5 million visitors each year. Not only is it one of the biggest markets, it is also one of the oldest, officially dating back to 1692. With the town hall facade posing as an advent calendar, this market is bustling with Christmas magic.

The Stuttgart Christmas Market hosts 290 stalls, each featuring something unique. The wide range of wares includes wooden toys, nativity figurines, sweet treats, international culinary delights and the famous *Glühwein*. In addition to the stalls, there are live concerts with over 60 musical groups performing as part of the official program.

For an antique lovers' dream, be sure to stop at the antique market on *Karlsplatz* square. Here you'll find over 20 vendors offering rare pieces, all within a heated tent. If you already have antique pieces that you want valued, bring them with. Experts at the market will value antique items free of charge.

Children can also enjoy the holiday festivities in fairy tale land. Take a journey through this winter wonderland on a mini steam engine and continue on with some engaging activities. Children can visit stalls to decorate gingerbread hearts, build chocolate fruit kabobs or craft a candle. With so many activities and things to see, the family is sure to be entertained for hours.

There is also a live nativity scene that includes lambs, sheep, goats and a donkey that stay in the crib on *Sporerstrasse*. The caretakers of the ani-

mals run a stall next to the nativity scene selling farm products like cheese and wool clothing.

Know before you go

- The Stuttgart Christmas Market is open Nov. 28 - Dec. 23.
- Opening times are Monday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Friday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
- Special opening times are Nov. 28, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m. and Dec. 15, 10 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. for late night shopping.
- The market is set in the middle of the city center. It is easy to get to from the main train station.

continued on page 20

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Things to see outside the market

Car fanatics will love that both Mercedes-Benz and Porsche have museums in Stuttgart. The Mercedes-Benz Museum is home to over 160 vehicles, ranging from some of the first automobiles to modern racing machines. It chronicles the influence of Carl Benz' cars on technology, social history and popular culture. The Porsche Museum has over 80 cars on display and currently has a special exhibition called "70 years of the Porsche sports car." The exhibit features a 356 Speedster from 1954, which was one of the first four Speedsters ever built.

For a great view of the city, go to the *Fernsehturm*, an iconic TV tower with an observation deck and café. This 60-year-old tower took almost two years to build and cost \$4.2 million. The Stuttgart landmark is the world's first telecommunications tower and was designed by structural engineer Professor Fritz Leonhardt.

Stuttgart's impressive architecture can be seen at the Old Castle. Originally built in the 10th century as a water fortress to protect the stud gardens, this castle evolved into a residence for the counts of Wuerttemberg in the 14th century. The castle is now home to the Wuerttemberg State Museum, which displays valuable pieces that represent the history of the state.

The neighboring town of Esslingen is just a short 20-minute drive from Stuttgart and is home to a truly unique Medieval Christmas Market.

ESSLINGEN MEDIEVAL CHRISTMAS MARKET

Take a trip back in time at the Esslingen Medieval Christmas Market. In addition to the traditional market food and fun, you will find vendors dressed in historical garments, craftsmen demonstrating their skills and stage artists showing off their juggling, musical and other nonsensical skills. Esslingen provides not only a market, but also a historical production. It's only appropriate, as the half-timbered houses create the perfect setting for an adventure into the past.

Once upon a time, craftsmen were a common sight and normal part of day to day life. Nowadays, seeing a blacksmith shape iron is incredibly rare. Don't miss out on witnessing blacksmiths, knife grinders, glass blowers, basket weavers, spoon carvers, saddlers and leather makers ply their trades. Try to keep up in medieval times during workshops that offer hands on training.

After all the hard work of crafting something from scratch, check out the plethora of hearty



virtuals offered. Warm up with dishes like freshly baked *Heurekaners*, grilled pork, stews, duck leg or venison goulash. If you want to skip the meat, there are also pakoras (deep fried vegetables), falafel and potato dishes. Don't forget to add a beverage! Hot berry wine, honey-sweet mead, brandy punch or a hot, spiced beer are a great way to keep warm. What better way to spend the holiday season than learning a new trade and delighting in cuisine from the medieval ages?

If building your own trinkets isn't quite your speed, don't worry. Merchants at colorfully decorated stalls offer their goods for sale, no work required except perhaps some light bargaining. Items like old lighters made from tinder and polypore, handmade candles, handcrafted knives and jewelry are all available.

Know before you go

- The Esslingen Medieval Market is open Nov. 27 - Dec. 21. The first day hours 4 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. The last day hours 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Regular hours Sunday - Wednesday 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Thursday to Saturday 11 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- The market is located near the *Rathausplatz* and *Hafenmarkt*. There is a shuttle bus on the weekends in Advent. Round trip 2 euros per person. On Saturday the shuttle runs every 30 minutes beginning at 11:00 a.m.; last departure 8:45 p.m. On Sunday the shuttle runs every 15 minutes beginning at 11:00 a.m.; last departure 9:00 p.m. The shuttle runs from Esslingen-Mettingen/ Daimler parking area to Schelztor bus stop and back or from Oberesslingen/Eber-spächer company to Augustinerstraße/Kleiner Markt bus stop and back.

Things to see outside the market

Esslingen Castle has towered over the town for over 700 years and is a great place to get a post-card perfect picture of the town. It was never home to nobility, but rather served as a part of the town fortifications to protect from attackers. The High Watch Tower originated in the 14th century, whereas the Big Tower was added in 1520 as a gun turret.

There are many old churches in this town, including *Stadtkirche St. Dionys*, where the history of Esslingen began in the year 777. The current church is the third of constructions on the original site and is a Gothic structure with outstanding stained glass windows from 1300. The windows are amongst the most beautiful medieval stained glass pieces in Germany.

The Old Town Hall, considered one of the most beautiful buildings in town with its colorful exterior, was built between 1422-1423 as a sales hall and tax house. The Renaissance facade, which was added in the 1580s, is particularly lovely. There is also a curved step gable, bell tower and astronomical clock where the current Registry Office resides.

For the most holly jolly Christmas you've ever had, take a trip to the Stuttgart area and experience the magic of the *Weihnachts Markt* and Medieval Christmas Market. From traditional to extraordinary, both markets are sure to dazzle you with their Christmas cheer. ■



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The Christmas Markets of & MUNICH FRAUENCHIEMSEE

By Jessica Zen



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You'll find decked out halls and all the stalls at the Christmas Markets of Munich and Frauenchiemsee. From the traditional market in Munich to the one of a kind market on an island in Frauenchiemsee, there's something special waiting for everyone at the Bavarian Christmas markets. Surrounded by the Alps, you'll feel as if you are in a winter wonderland during these holiday celebrations.

MUNICH CHRISTMAS MARKET

Jingling bells, fantastic food smells and all the best gifts are just waiting for you to discover them at the Munich Christmas Market. With over 160 stalls, there is certainly no shortage of things to see spread throughout the Marienplatz and beyond.

The biggest attraction, quite literally, of this market is the Christmas tree that towers in front of the new town hall. The square is decorated with over 2,500 candles that light up the night and create a calming Advent ambiance.

Bavarian culture is on full display during this market, as locals sell a variety of handmade

items including hand-painted glass Christmas ornaments, sheepskin jackets and even figurines made from dried fruits and nuts. From the food market you'll find fresh chestnuts, fruit cakes and herb liqueurs along with fan favorites like *Glühwein* and gingerbread cookies.

Don't miss visiting the Square of Stars in the Rindermarkt for a romantic walk through frosted trees glittering with luminous stars. Here you'll find Bavarian delicacies like bratwurst, flamed salmon and steaming hot beer.

To add a few special pieces to your nativity scene, visit Neuhauser Strasse for Germany's largest nativity market. From a stable lantern to gifts from the three wise men, this section of the market has everything you need to create the most stupendous nativity scene.

Know before you go

- The Munich Christmas market is located in the Marienplatz. It stretches to the tower of the old town hall, its inner courtyard, along Kaufingerstraße and Neuhauserstraße to the Richard-Strauss-Brunnen, and from Weinstraße to the Sternenplatzl at Rindermarkt. It is easily accessible from the subway, U3 and U6. Exit the subway at Marienplatz.
- The market is open Nov. 27 - Dec. 24.
- There is an annual Krampus Run around the Munich Christmas Market where participants dressed in elaborate costumes frighten market

continued on page 24

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continued from page 22

goers. This run was recorded as early as the 16th century and is especially popular amongst the younger crowds.

Things to see outside the market

St. Peter's Church, the oldest in Munich, is located in the Marienplatz and offers a stunning view of the city from the tower. The locals refer to the church as Old Peter. Construction began in the 11th century, but the church has been rebuilt and expanded several times. The church is home to an 18th century gilded high altar, large ceiling frescoes and the jeweled skeleton of St. Mundita.

Nymphenburg Palace is an impressive baroque structure that once housed former rulers of Bavaria. It was commissioned as a summer residence in 1664, though construction and changes took place through the 1800s. Today many rooms are on display, including a Coat of Arms Chamber, the bathroom of King Maximilian II and Karl Theodor's chamber.

New Town Hall is a neo-Gothic building with a soaring tower and chiming clock with 42 bells and 32 life-size figurines. The 300-foot facade features almost the entire line of the House of Wittlesbach in Bavaria. The Glockenspiel tower figurines dance daily at 11 a.m. and noon. For a great panoramic view of the city, climb the tower to the observation deck.

If you just can't get enough of the traditional Bavarian Christmas markets, travel an hour south of Munich to Frauenchiemsee, where the magic continues.

FRAUENCHIEMSEE CHRISTMAS MARKET

The Frauenchiemsee Christmas Market is a one-of-a-kind market located on an island surrounded by the perfectly clear waters of Lake Chiemsee and the magnificent Bavarian Alps. With such a picture-perfect backdrop, an incredibly romantic winter wonderland emerges. In addition to the market, the entire island is strung with lights and holiday decorations, setting the scene to get in the holiday spirit. This Christmas haven will have you merrily humming holiday favorites like "Silent Night" and "Let It Snow" before you leave.

Though smaller than the Munich market and hosting only 90 stalls, this certainly isn't a market you want to miss. There's no shortage of culinary delicacies, handmade items and mulled wine on the island of Frauenchiemsee.

In addition to the stalls, there will be performances by carol singers, Christmas readings from both local and national celebrities and a



range of other activities including a children's program. This unique market is truly something special to behold.

Know before you go

- The Frauenchiemsee Christmas market is from Nov. 30 - Dec. 2 and Dec. 7 - 9. It is open on Friday from 2 - 7 p.m. and Saturday - Sunday from noon - 7 p.m.
- Getting to Frauenchiemsee is easy with regular ferries from Prien at Lake Chiemsee. With just one ticket you can go from the train station in Prien to the Prien/Stock harbor and get on a ferry to the market. If you arrive by car, there are parking areas near the train station or at the harbor.

Things to see outside the market

Neuschwanstein Castle, the famous fairytale castle of King Ludwig II, is easily accessible from Prien. Ludwig lived in a fantasy world to remove himself from reality, and thus surrounded himself with fantastic castles. In 1869, construction for the "new castle" began. Tickets to visit this amazing piece of history can be purchased at the ticket center in Hohenschwangau, the village below the castle.

The neighboring island of Herrenchiemsee is home to New Palace Herrenchiemsee, another

massive home built for King Ludwig II, modeled after Versailles. Construction began in 1878 but was never fully completed, as Ludwig II died in 1886. Visitors are able to view the king's rooms, the State Staircase and the Great Hall of Mirrors.

The Hohensalzburg Fortress is located just 45 minutes south of Prien in Austria and is the biggest fully preserved castle in central Europe. The fortress, tower of Salzburg on Festungsberg hill, was initially built by archbishop Gebhard in 1077 to protect the principality and archbishops from attack. In the 20th century the fortress was used to hold prisoners of war during WWI and Nazi activists before Germany's annexation of Austria in the 1930s.

Without a doubt, the markets in Bavaria shouldn't be missed. Munich boasts a Christmas tree that is sure to steal your breath away, while Frauenchiemsee offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to see an island dedicated to Christmas, surrounded by one of the most gorgeous backgrounds the world has to offer. Pack a scarf, maybe even some base layers, and get ready for some of the most fantastic Christmas markets you have ever seen! ■

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christmas

By Emma Bareihis

IN BERLIN & Tropical Islands



The capital of Germany hosts some of the largest attractions in the country with its detailed history to entertain tourists throughout the year. During the holiday season, these beloved monuments and museums share the spotlight with the next biggest attraction in Germany, Christmas markets. Travel to Berlin this Christmas to experience the city in a different atmosphere, one of *Glühwein* and tradition strung together with twinkling lights.

THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Located in between the Französischer Dom and the Deutscher Dom, the Gendarmenmarkt WeihnachtsZauber is one of the biggest Christmas markets in Berlin. The historical square dates back to the 17th century, gracing the backdrop of the Christmas market with architectural beauty. Enjoy on-stage performances in front of the Konzerthaus for the small admission price of one euro.

Open Nov. 26-Dec. 31, 2018.

Down the street, you can find another Christmas market at the Berlin Town Hall, Rotes Rathaus



Weihnachtszeit. Take the Ferris wheel to the top to overlook the square decorated with colorful lights. Organ players create an ambiance unique to the town hall. Take your children to meet Santa Claus and watch him fly over the Neptune Fountain with his reindeer.

Open Nov. 26-Dec. 30, 2018.

One of the busier markets in Berlin, Alexanderplatz is in the heart of downtown Berlin. With a Ferris wheel nearby, an ice rink for skating and rides for children, you'll surely find endless entertainment options. One of the special features of Alexanderplatz is the Christmas pyramid covered

in more than 5,000 lights. Known as the biggest walk-in Christmas pyramid in Europe, walk to the top to enjoy a view of the whole market.

Open Nov. 26-Dec. 26, 2018.

Know before you go

- Admission is one euro to go towards charity and on-stage performances at the Gendarmenmarkt. There is free admission for children under 12 and free admission for all from Monday to Friday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., excluding December 25 and 26.
- Do not bring your pet! Dogs are not allowed



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to these markets. Only guide dogs are permitted on these market grounds.

- There will only be four entrances to the Gendarmenmarkt market, each with controlled security. Do not bring a suitcase or backpack and be ready for a bag check.
- The U2 and U6 Stadtmitte are public transportation connections direct to the Gendarmenmarkt. The walk from the station is under two minutes. The U2, U5 and U8 go direct to Alexanderplatz. It is a six-minute walk to Rotes Rathaus from Alexanderplatz.
- The closest parking garage to the Gendarmenmarkt is the Conti Park Parkhaus behind the Konzerthaus. The fee is 0,80 euros per 30 minutes or 5,50 euros per day.

Things to see outside the market

If it is your first time to the German city, the Christmas market is not going to be the extent of what you'll want to visit. Explore outside the market to get a better feel for Berlin, whether you are a foodie or history buff. Turn on your tourist mode to explore these popular sites.

A trip to Berlin wouldn't be complete with visiting the Brandenburg Gate. Erected in the 18th century, the sandstone gate is a symbol of

unity after years of division in Germany.

Walk 270 steps to the top of the Victory Column in the Tiergarten to get a view of the giant city and learn about Prussia's victory in the Franco-German war.

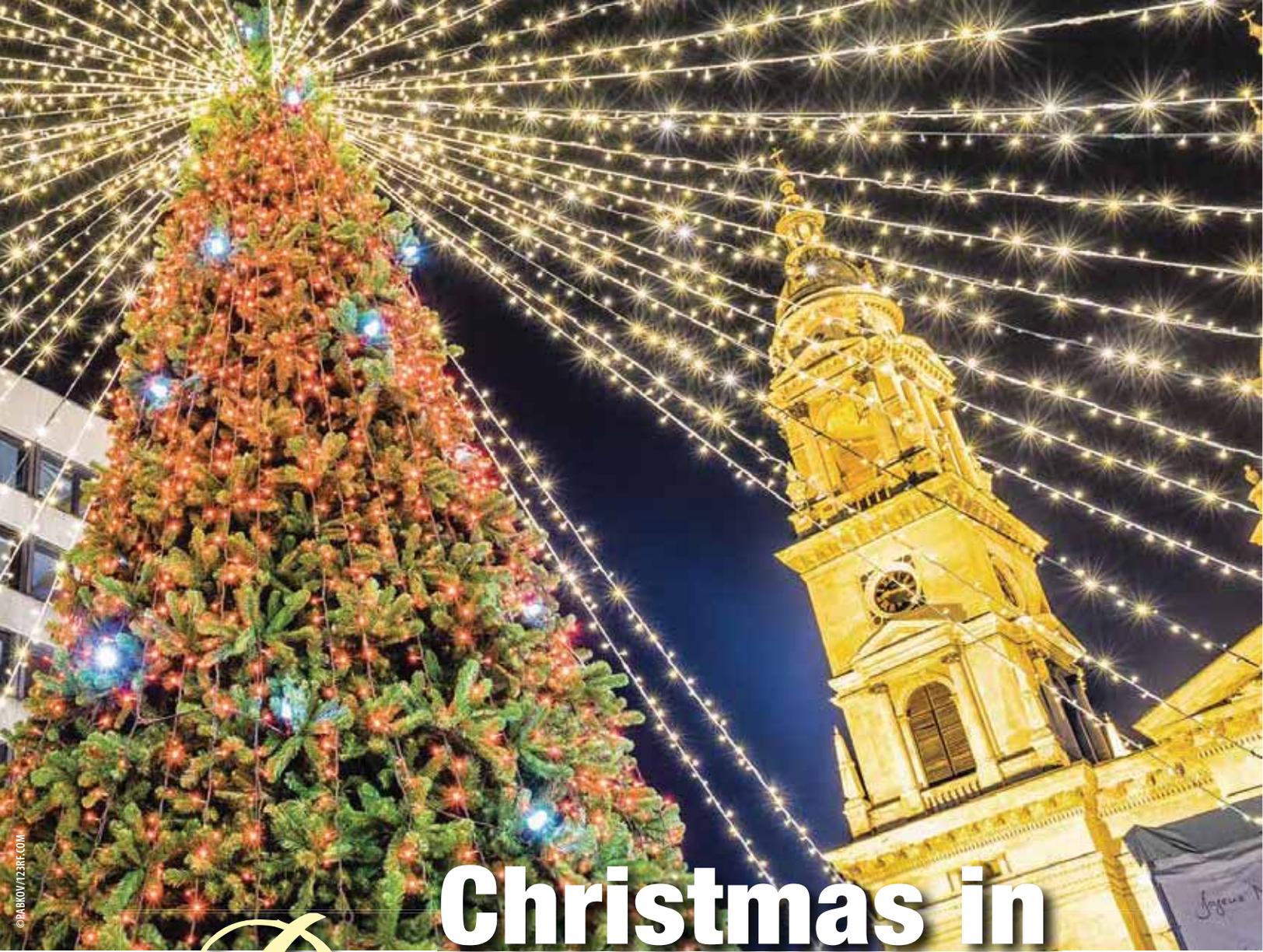
Stop at a local restaurant in the city to experience the German food and drinks. Enjoy a classic beer and bratwurst style meal for a relaxing break during your visit.

Things to do nearby

Ditch the freezing temperatures for an indoor beach at Tropical Islands. Tropical Islands is Europe's largest tropical holiday resort, located 60 km outside of Berlin. Home to 100,000 square meters of water facilities, swim, dive and explore the Tropical Sea or Lagoon at Tropical Islands resort. Take your mind away from the Christmas chaos with seven saunas and steam baths at the Sauna & Spa. The indoor sandy beaches allow you to dig in your toes after being stuffed in winter boots all month. With over 10 restaurants, cafes and bars, experience food from around the world and tropical refreshments for everyone in the family. After Christmas, plan to spend a

relaxing New Year's Eve on the Tropical Islands beach with lounge music and drinks, instead of a loud, cold firework display. Find prices and ticket options online at www.tropical-islands.de/en/prices-booking/prices-tickets.

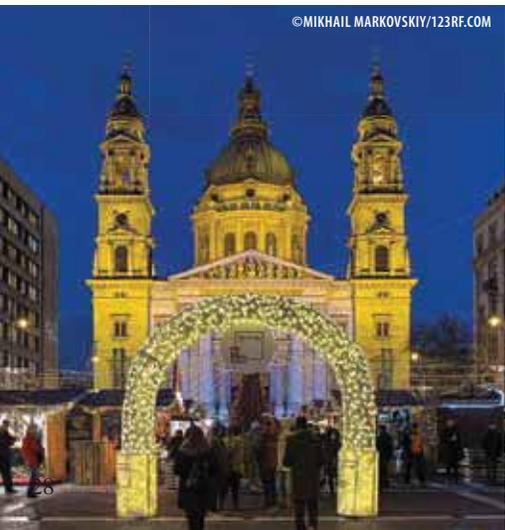
In a city of almost 900 square kilometers, there are endless routes to appreciate the rich beauty and history of Berlin. As it is the holiday season, ambling through the booths at a Christmas market is a must. But, exploring other landmarks is essential to fully understand the antiquity of the city. If you find too much chaos in the city, relax with a trip to Tropical Islands. Have fun and experience Christmas in Berlin this season. ■



Christmas in

Budapest

By Elizabeth Jones



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Venture out and experience the holiday season in Budapest, one of Europe's most amazing cities. From world renowned Christmas markets, loads of sights to see, relaxing thermal baths (yes, even in the winter!), unique ruin bars and much, much more — spending Christmas in Budapest will not disappoint!

CHRISTMAS MARKET IN VOROSMARTY SQUARE

The most popular market of Budapest can be found in Vorosmarty Square in the downtown area. Full of dazzling lights, colors, delightful smells and countless shopping opportunities, the market in Vorosmarty Square will indeed get you in the Christmas spirit. Come hungry to indulge in a variety of street food and mulled wine, but especially try *kurtoskalacs*, also known as chimney cakes. These heavenly, spiral-shaped pastries are dusted with cinnamon and sugar and served toasty, making it a warm treat your taste buds will love!

In the evenings, take advantage of the free concerts featuring various genres to include jazz, folk, indie, blues, soul and more! Another market highlight is the light show featured on Cafe Gerbeaud, where you can watch the lights flash bright colors against the cafe underneath the night sky — it's definitely a show you don't want to miss!

Open Nov. 9, 2018 – Jan. 1, 2019.

CHRISTMAS FAIR IN ST. STEPHEN'S SQUARE

Find another magnificent market only 10 minutes away situated in St. Stephen's Square directly in front of St. Stephen's Basilica. Walk through the Advent gates to enter this market, also known as the Christmas or Advent Fair. Once inside, peruse along the wooden stalls that showcase the most unique and high quality traditional crafts of Hungary. Shop, eat, drink, and be merry throughout this Christmas Fair.

Feeling adventurous? Skate your way across the ice rink found in the heart of the market. The rink

is free for children up to 14-years-old. Once the evening rolls around, at every hour on the hour between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m., watch a Christmas light show on the outdoor walls of St. Stephen's Basilica, displaying festive colors and patterns for all to marvel at.

Know before you go

- Walk to the markets or take public transport.
- Bring cash in Hungarian Forint or euros.
- You can book a Christmas market tour and wine tasting for both markets.
- There are a handful of other very small Christmas markets sprinkled throughout the city.
- Buy a Budapest Christmas market mug as the perfect souvenir for yourself or loved ones.
- Visit www.budapestchristmas.com for all of your Christmas-in-Budapest planning needs.

Things to do outside the market

Go for a magical ride on the Budapest Christmas Tram (Number 2) which will be decorated with thousands of twinkling, white and blue lights for a festive experience unlike any other. Use the Budapest Card or public transport travel pass for the ride!

Dates: Dec. 1, 2017 – Jan. 7, 2018
Closed: Dec. 24 and 31



one, the Szechenyi Baths. Take a dip in two open air thermal pools or any of the 15 indoor pools if it gets too chilly outside. Whether you want to try any of the spa services or attend the fun weekend pool parties, the Szechenyi Baths have something for everyone!

Marvel at the grandeur of the Parliament building with its lush carpet, gold decor, high ceilings and stained glass windows. Since the building can not be toured without a guide, splurge a little on booking a private tour well before your trip.

Peruse along the cobblestone streets passing Baroque houses, hole-in-the-wall cafes, historical monuments and more that can be found in Castle Hill sitting 170-meters above the Danube River. A top attraction includes Fisherman's Bastion, a 19th century fortification resembling a fairytale-like lookout tower. Enjoy panoramic views of the sparkling river below and the rest of historic Budapest from the Fisherman's Bastion's intricately-designed turrets. Also situated on Castle Hill is Buda Castle, also known as the Royal Palace, a must-see attraction with a vast amount of history to share from over the centuries. The palace is open for daily tours.

Budapest is also known for its spectacular ruin bars in its oldest district, District VII, also referred to as the Jewish Quarter. From the outside, these bars are unrecognizable with no lines, booming music or crazy, bright lights. Once you step inside



Need another rink to ice skate on? Found in Budapest City Park is an ice rink known as Varosligeti Műjégpálya. Skate rentals are available, and visitors pay by the hour. Be sure to snap a lot of selfies, especially with the spectacular Vajdahunyad Castle in the background.

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat. - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Closed: Dec. 24

Unwind in the thermal baths throughout the city but be sure to pay a visit to the most popular

the bars, find mismatched, flea market furniture, graffiti from local artists and a very specific atmosphere catering to each of the bars' individual, quirky themes.

Known for always being an enchanting city and one of the best destinations to spend Christmas in Europe, Budapest will surely surpass all your expectations this holiday season! ■

NOT JUST

By Jessica Zen

ANOTHER MARKET: *Engelkemarkt*

Wander onto the ships and marvel at their dedication to bringing holiday cheer and merriment...

The illuminated town hall of Emden presents the perfect backdrop to this maritime Christmas village, which graces the town each year during the Christmas season. The stalls are lavishly decorated for the holiday and offer a variety of hot beverages, tasty treats and unique decorations. The crisp air carries the scent of cinnamon, gingerbread, vanilla and almond throughout the market while visitors “ooh and ahh” over the many specialties and handmade ornaments. At the heart of the market is a large Christmas pyramid that serves mulled wine, punch and more. But that’s not all...

The nearby harbor hosts both museum and traditional sailing ships that are also lit for the evening’s festivities. Market goers can wander onto the ships and marvel at their dedication to bringing holiday cheer and merriment, despite the chill in the salty air. Calmly sway back and forth on the ships as you marvel at the perfect combination of Christmas and seafaring tradition.

What quality market would be complete without the star of the show? Starting on Dec. 1, Santa Claus visits the city garden stage daily at 5 p.m. with gifts for all of the children, further enhancing the joy and anticipation for Christmas to come. Kids can enjoy the magic of the lights after receiving their new gifts from Santa, while parents enjoy sipping on grog and browsing the many stalls both on and off the ships.

The *Engelkemarkt* gets its name from the figure of the golden eagle that rests over the city wall on the Emden coat of arms. This market is family-friendly and open to anyone who wants to get away from the hustle and bustle of Christmas season and just enjoy the spectacular lights, food and drinks offered while browsing the selection of goods.

The 2018 *Engelkemarkt* is from Nov. 26 to Dec. 23 and Dec. 27 to 31. Visitors are welcome from 11 a.m. to approximately 8 p.m. daily and from 11 a.m. to approximately 4 p.m. on Dec. 31.

Delight in an age old tradition at Emden’s fairy tale Christmas market. It won’t be an experience you’ll soon forget. After all, it isn’t every day that you board a ship in the North Sea decked out in Christmas finery! ■

Christmas is just around the corner and the endless lists of markets in every city, town and village can become overwhelming. It’s hard to decide which market is best and has something truly unique in comparison to the countless others. For an incredibly magical Christmas market experience, visit the port city of Emden in northwest Germany. This East Frisian city by the sea is home to the Engelkemarkt, a special Christmas market that takes place not only on land, but also on ships! Emden takes Christmas to a whole new level by removing the traditional winding cobblestone streets of the market and adding water to create a floating paradise. The ships masts and sails being lit up with thousands of twinkling lights is an absolute wonder to behold!

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A young boy wearing a red Santa hat and a red and white plaid shirt is focused on kneading a ball of dough on a wooden surface. The background is a bright, blurred kitchen with wooden cabinets. In the foreground, a rolling pin and some cookie cutters are visible. The top of the image features a decorative wooden sign with a rustic, weathered appearance, adorned with greenery, red berries, and pine needles. The sign contains the title and author information.

The WEIHNACHTS Bäckerei

By Carrie Farrell



*In der Weihnachtsbäckerei
gibt es manche Leckerei
zwischen Mehl und Milch
macht so mancher Knilch
eine riesengroße Kleckerei.
In der Weihnachtsbäckerei*

*(In the Christmas bakery/there are many
treats/between flour and milk/some
joker is making/a gigantic mess – In the
Christmas bakery)*

This catchy holiday tune is a favorite among German children during the holidays and reflects a long-held tradition of holiday cookie baking.

The Christmas season is a very special and magical time in Germany. People get into the Christmas spirit by strolling through illuminated streets and brilliantly decorated Christmas markets in nearly every town - both large and small. Homes and *Tannenbäume* (Christmas trees) are adorned with twinkle lights and families focus heavily on spending time with loved ones and friends.

Sharing in Tradition

During the whole Advent period, besides shopping for presents, families stress the importance of giving the most precious of all gifts: time. Time builds childhood memories that last forever. A great way to make the season memorable and spark a child's imagination is by visiting a *Weihnachtsbäckerei* (Christmas bakery). The *Weihnachtsbäckerei* plays a time-honored role for children both young and old. It is an occasion for children to gather with friends and family to participate in the merriment of traditional and seasonal baking. The *Weihnachtsbäckerei* can be found among the many stalls at Christmas markets and at local village bakeries across Germany. Village master bakers will even offer a *Weihnachtsbäckerei* program providing local children the opportunity to bake Christmas cookies under the supervision of trained masters of their profession. Whether a family run bakery or a hut at a Christ-



mas market, children bake their own cookies at the *Weihnachtsbäckerei*. From rolling out the dough, cutting shapes and decorating cookies to their very own taste with a variety of icings, nuts, jams, various colored candies and, of course, lots and lots of snow. Or, what we unimaginative adults call powdered sugar. Once the ingredients of childhood imagination are complete the dough is popped in the oven for, what every child would describe as an eternity. As the timer finally rings, not a second too soon either, the delicious treats are ready to be devoured. Although there was surely a lot of nibbling going on in between, there will be plenty of cookies left to take home.

Hands-on booths for children

Some Christmas bakeries are considered all-around "hands-on" booths. In addition to cookie baking, these festive huts are a great stop for little ones to participate in simple

holiday crafts such as Christmas card making and sand art. Other art booths expose children to more extensive hands-on trades such as candle-making, leather work and glass painting to name a few. Here, kids can explore their creativity while making unique Christmas gifts to take home. Not only will someone be the lucky recipient of a handmade gift, but more importantly these activities make memories and promote both physical and mental development.

It's a special kind of magic that greets children during the Advent season in Germany. Taking part in the tasty tradition of cookie baking is sure to be an unforgettable experience for your kids while in Germany. Not to mention making new friends is so much easier when treats are involved!

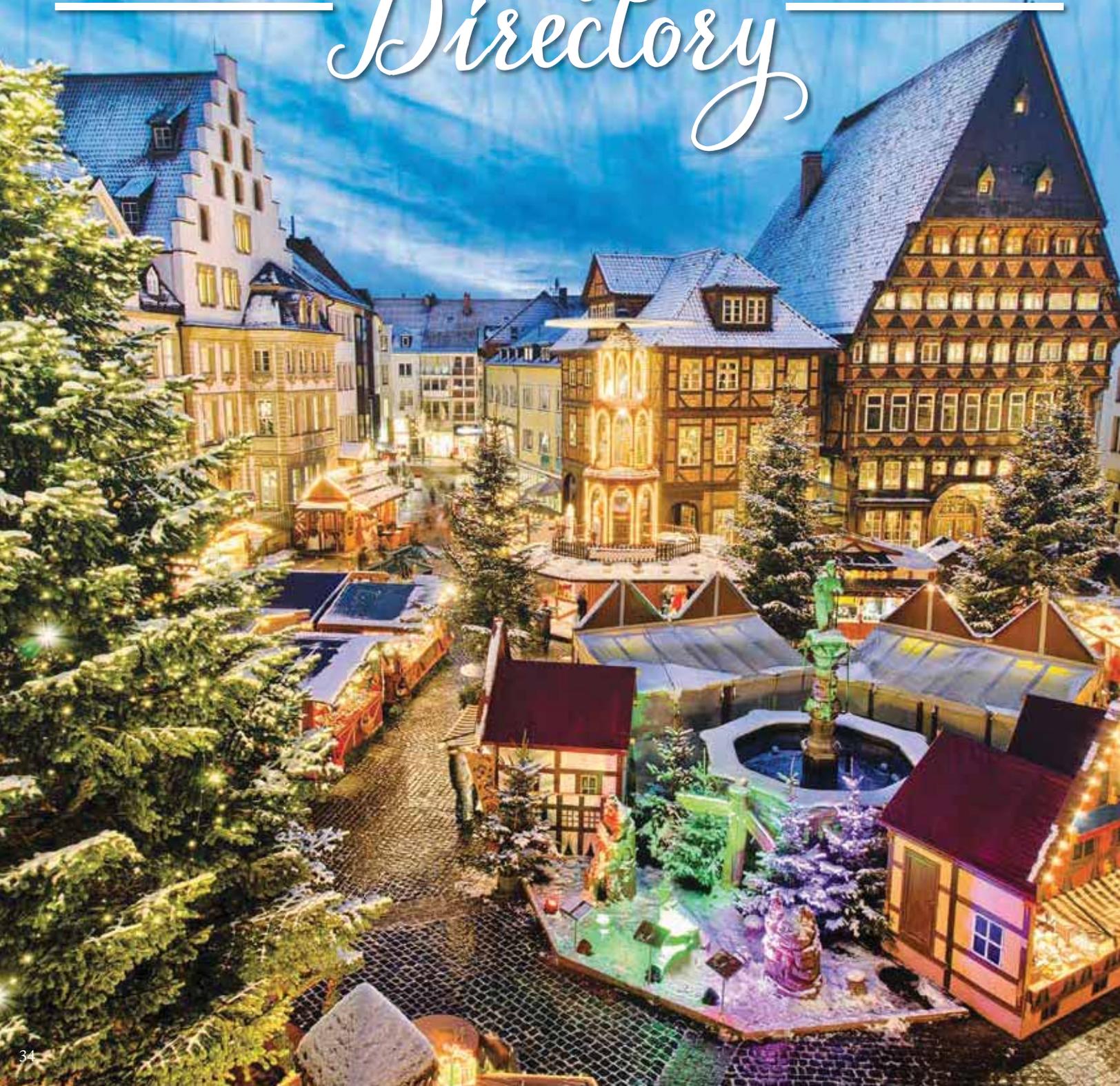
Frohe Weihnachten! ■



2018 European

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Directory



2018 Christmas Markets

AUSTRIA

- Bregenz:** Innenstadt, Nov. 16-Dec. 23
- Eisenstadt:** Esterházy Castle, Nov. 23-Dec. 24
- Graz:** Main Square, Nov. 23-Dec. 24
- Innsbruck:** Altstadt/Marktplatz/Maria-Theresien-Strasse/Hungerburg, Nov. 15-Dec. 23/Nov. 15-Dec. 23/ Nov. 15-Jan. 6/ Nov. 25-Dec. 23
- Linz:** Main square and Volksgarten, Nov. 17-Dec. 24/Nov. 17-Dec. 18
- Rattenberg:** Torchlitz Christmas, Nov. 24-25, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9, 14-16, 22
- Salzburg:** Hellbrunn Castle, Nov. 23-Dec. 24
- Vienna:** City hall, Nov. 17-Dec. 24

BELGIUM

- Antwerp:** City Hall, Dec. 8-Jan. 6
- Bruges:** Simon Stevin Plein and Market Square, Nov. 24
- Brussels:** La Grand Place, Nov. 30-Jan. 6
- Eupen:** City Center, Dec. 14-16 *one weekend*
- Ghent:** Winter Festival, Dec. 7-Jan. 6
- Leuven:** Ladeuze Square and Herbert Hoover Square, Dec. 12-23
- Liège:** Place du Marché, Nov. 30-Dec. 30
- Modave:** Modave Castle, Dec. 15-Jan. 6
- Namur:** Place d'armes and Rue de Fer, Dec. 1-31
- Ypres:** Market Square, Nov. 25-Jan. 2

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Prague:** Old Town Square/Wenceslas Square/ Republic Square/Havel's Market/ St. George's Basilica, Dec. 1-Jan. 6

DENMARK

- Copenhagen:** Castle Kronborg/Kongens Nytorv/ Nytorv Square, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9/ Nov. 16-Dec. 22/ Nov. 16-Dec. 21
- Odense:** City Center, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9
- Ribe:** Gram Castle, Nov. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18

ENGLAND

- Bath:** Bath Abbey Churchyard, Nov. 24-Dec. 9
- Birmingham:** Victoria Square/New Street, Nov. 15-Dec. 23
- Bristol:** Bristol Shopping Quarter, Nov. 9-Dec. 23
- Bury St. Edmunds:** Town Centre, Nov. 22-25 *one weekend*
- Durham:** City Center, Nov. 30-Dec. 2
- Exeter:** Cathedral Green, Dec. 15-16 *one weekend*

Gloucester Quays: Victorian Christmas Market, Nov. 15-25

Leeds: Nov. 10-24

Lincoln: Norman Castle, Dec. 6-9 *one weekend*

London: Hyde Park/Leicester Square, Nov. 22-Dec.6/Nov. 9-Jan. 5

Manchester: Nov. 9-Dec. 22

FRANCE

Colmar: Town center, Nov.23-Dec 30

Dijon: Place de la République, Dec. 2-Jan. 7

Lille: Place Rihour, Nov. 22-Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 25)

Metz: Nov. 17

Mulhouse: Place de la Réunion, Nov. 24-Dec. 27

Paris: Notre Dame Cathedral/Quartier des Halles/ Place Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Dec. 15-24, Nov. 27-Dec. 31/ Dec. 1-Jan 1

Reims: Parvis de la Cathédrale, Dec. 24-25 *one weekend*

Ribeauville: Town Center, Dec. 8-9, 15-16

Riquewihr: Historic city center , Dec. 1-23

Rouen: Town center , Nov. 23-Jan. 7

Strasbourg: Cathedral Square, Nov. 23-Dec. 30

Toulouse: Place du Capitol, Nov. 23-Dec. 26

GERMANY

Visit these sites for more information about German Christmas markets: www.weihnachtsmarkt-deutschland.de
www.germany-christmas-market.org.uk
www.brunnvalla.ch/weihnachtsmaerkte/deutschland.html

BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

Bad Wimpfen: Old German Christmas Market, City Center, Nov.30-Dec.2, Dec.7-9, 14-16

Baden-Baden: Kurhaus Colonnades, & Old Town, Nov.26-Dec.30

Breitnau: Devil's Valley Railway, Dec.1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-23

Burg Hohenzollern: Hohenzollern Castle, Nov.30-Dec.2, Dec.7-9

Bruchsal: Bruchsal Castle, Dec. 7-14, 14-16

Durlach: Neuer Karlsbrunnen/ New Karlsburg Fountain, Nov. 27-Dec. 22

Esslingen: Esslingen Marktplatz, Nov. 28-Dec.22

Freiberg: Rathausplatz, Franziskanerstraße, Unterlindenplatz & Kartoffelmarkt, Nov.22-Dec.23

Gengenbach: City Hall, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Göppingen: Marktplatz, Nov. 29-Dec. 29

Heidelberg: Kornmarkt, Marktplatz, Universitätsplatz, Anatomiegarten & Bismarckplatz (5 hist. squares), Nov. 26-Dec. 22

Heilbronn: Marktplatz, Kiliansplatz and in the Sülmerstraße, Nov. 27-Dec.22

Karlsruhe: Friedrichsplatz, Nov. 27-Dec.23

Konstanz (Constance): Marktstätte, Nov. 29-Dec. 22

Ladenburg: Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23

Ludwigsburg: Marktplatz, Nov. 27-Dec. 23

Mannheim: Kapuzinerplanken/Water Tower, Nov. 28-Dec. 23

Maulbronn: Kloster Maulbronn, Dec. 8-9 *one weekend*

Rottenburg: Am Dom, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Schwetzingen: Schwetzingen Palace, Nov. 29-Dec. 2, 6-9, 13-16

Speyer: Old Mint (Alten Münze) on Maximilianstrasse, Nov. 26-Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25-26)

Stuttgart: Schillerplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 23

Triberg: Weihnachtszauber at the waterfall, Dec. 25-30

Tübingen: Old town, Dec. 14-16 *one weekend*

Ulm: Münsterplatz, Nov. 26-Dec. 22

Weinheim: Marktplatz, Dec. 8-23

BAYERN

Altötting: Kapellplatz, Nov. 24-Dec. 16

Andechs: Kloster Andechs, Dec. 7-9 *one weekend*

Aschaffenburg: Schlossplatz, Nov. 29-Dec. 23

Augsburg: City Hall, Nov. 26-Dec. 24

Bad Hindelag: Schloss hof, Nov. 30-Dec. 9

Bad Tölz: Marktstraße, Nov.23-Dec. 24

Bamberg: City center, Nov. 29-Dec. 23

Bayreuth: Spitalkirche, Nov. 26-Dec. 23

Berchtesgaden: Advent market, old town, Nov. 29-Dec. 31 (closed Dec. 4, 11, 12, 25)

Coburg: Old town, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Dinkelsbühl: Spitalhof Christmas market, Dec. 1-23

Frauenchiemsee: Bahnhof, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9

Füssen: St. Mang monastery, Dec. 7-9, 14-16

Garmisch-Partenkirchen: Richard-Strauss-Square, Nov. 24-Dec. 23

Kempten: Rathausplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 22

Lindau: Seepromenade, Nov. 22-Dec. 16

Miltenberg: Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Mittenwald: Parish Church, Dec. 13-16 *one weekend*

2018 Christmas Markets

- München (Munich):** Marienplatz and other areas, Nov. 27-Dec. 24
- Nördlingen:** Romantic Christmas market, old town, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Nürnberg (Nuremberg):** Hauptmarkt, Nov. 30-Dec. 24
- Passau:** Domplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 23
- Prien am Chiemsee:** Marktgemeinde, Nov. 3-Dec. 2
- Regensburg:** Romantic Christmas Market at Thurn & Taxis Palace/
Lucrezia Craft Market at Haidplatz-Kohlenmarkt/Katharinenhospital
Advent Market/Christmas Market at Neupfarrplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 23/
Nov. 30-Dec. 23/ Nov. 28-Dec. 23/Nov. 28-Dec. 23
- Rothenburg ob der Tauber:** City Hall, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Schwangau:** Culinary St. Nikolaus Market, Dec. 2 *one weekend*
- Tegernsee:** Schlossplatz, Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20, 21
- Würzburg:** Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

BERLIN & BRANDENBURG

- Berlin:** Alexanderplatz/ Roten Rathaus/ Potsdamer Platz/ Gendarmenmarkt, Nov. 28- Dec. 26/Nov. 27- Dec. 29 (closed Dec. 24)/
Nov. 2- Jan. 6 (closed Nov.18, 25), Nov. 27- Dec. 31
- Bremen:** Innenstadt, Nov. 26-Dec. 23

HESSEN

- Bad Homburg:** Schlossplatz, Dec. 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 22-23
- Braunfels:** Conservation Plaza, Nov. 30-Dec. 1 *one weekend*
- Butzbach:** Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 2 *one weekend*
- Darmstadt:** Marktplatz, Nov. 26- Dec. 23
- Frankfurt am Main:** Römerberg, Paulsplatz and Mainkai, Nov. 26-Dec. 22
- Kassel:** Fairytale Christmas Market, Königsplatz and Friedrichsplatz, Nov. 26-Dec. 30 (Closed Dec. 24-26)
- Marburg:** Downtown, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Michelstadt:** Old German market, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Ronneburg:** Burg Ronneburg, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16
- Rüdesheim am Rhein:** Christmas Market of Nations, old town, Nov. 22-Dec. 23 (closed Nov. 25)
- Wetzlar:** Schiller Square, Station Street, Nov. 29-Dec. 28
- Wiesbaden:** Twinkling Star Market, Schlossplatz, Nov. 27-Dec. 23

MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN

- Rostock:** Kröpelinstraße and Landerstraße, Nov. 26-Dec. 22
- Schwerin:** Marktplatz, Nov. 26-Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 24,25)
- Stralsund:** Christmas market between city and New Market, Nov. 27-Dec. 22
- Wismar:** Marktplatz, Nov. 26-Dec. 21



NIEDERSACHSEN (Lower Saxony)

- Braunschweig:** Around cathedral and Domplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 29 (closed Dec.24-25)
- Celle:** Old town, Nov. 29-Dec. 27 (closed Dec. 24)
- Goslar:** Marktplatz, Nov. 28-Dec.30
- Göttingen:** Marktplatz, Nov. 28-Dec. 29 (closed Dec.24-26)
- Hamel:** Old town, Nov. 26-Dec.23
- Hannover:** City center, Nov. 28-Dec. 22
- Hildesheim:** City Hall, Nov. 26-Dec. 27 (closed Dec. 24-25)
- Lüneburg:** Historic Christmas Market, City Center, Nov. 28-Dec. 23
- Osnaabrück:** In front of city hall, Nov. 26-Dec. 23

NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN

- Aachen:** Marktplatz, Nov. 23-Dec. 23
- Bonn:** Münsterplatz, Nov. 23-Dec. 23 (closed Nov. 25)
- Dortmund:** Hansaplatz, Nov. 22-Dec. 30 (closed Nov. 25, Dec.25)
- Düsseldorf:** City center, Nov. 22-Dec. 30 (closed Nov. 25, Dec.25)
- Essen:** City center, Nov. 22-Dec. 23
- Köln (Cologne):** Several markets, Nov. 26-Dec. 23
- Mechemich:** Burg Satzvey, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23
- Monschau:** Marktplatz along Rurstraße, Nov. 23-25, 30-Dec. 2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23 (Closed Nov. 25)

- Münster:** Several markets, Nov. 26-Dec. 23
- Oberhausen:** Centr0/Old Town, Nov. 16-Dec. 23/Nov. 21-Dec. 23
- Wolfenbüttel:** Marktplatz, Nov. 27-Dec. 23

RHEINLAND-PFALZ

- Bad Hönningen:** Old town, Dec. 1-2 *one weekend*
- Bad Kreuznach:** Marktplaz, Nov. 23-Dec. 23
- Bernkastel-Kues:** Old town, Nov. 23-Dec. 23 (closed Nov. 25)
- Bingen:** Hornstein ruin, Dec. 8-9 *one weekend*
- Cochem:** Erdertplatz/Castle Market, Nov. 30-Dec. 23/Dec. 15-16
- Deidesheim:** Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23
- Kaiserslautern:** Schillerplatz and Stiftskirche, Nov. 26-Dec. 23/
Nov. 27- Dec. 30
- Koblenz:** Old town, Nov. 23-Dec. 22
- Landau:** Marktplatz, Nov. 29- Dec. 20
- Ludwigshafen:** Berliner Platz, Nov. 23-Dec. 23
- Mainz:** Marktplatz, Nov. 29-Dec. 23
- Mayen:** Castle courtyard, Nov. 30-Dec.2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23
- Neustadt a.b. Weinstrasse:** Marktplatz, Nov. 26-Dec. 23
- Oberwesel:** Marktplatz und im Kulturhaus, Dec. 1-2 *one weekend*
- Saarburg:** City center , Dec. 13
- Thallichtenberg:** Medieval Christmas Market, Lichtenberg Castle, Dec. 1-2*one weekend*
- Trier:** Hauptmarkt, Nov. 26-Dec. 22
- Trippstadt-Johanniskreuz:** Forest Christmas Market, Dec. 15-16 *one weekend*

SAARLAND

- Homburg:** Christian-Weber-Platz, Dec. 10-30
- Merzig:** Townhouse, Nov. 29-Dec. 24
- Saarbrücken:** City center/Castle, Nov.26-Dec.23
- Saarlouis:** Nov. 26 - Dec. 23

SACHSEN (Saxony)

- Annaburg-Buchholz:** Marktplatz/Grand Mountain Parade, Nov. 30-Dec. 23/Dec. 23
- Aue:** Rauchelmannelmarkt, Nov. 30-Dec. 2 *one weekend*
- Bautzen:** Old town, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Chemnitz:** Marktplatz, Nov. 30-Dec. 23
- Dresden:** Striezelmarkt, city center, Nov. 29-Dec. 24

Friberg: Freiburger Obermarkt, Nov. 22-Dec. 23 (closed Nov. 25)

Johanngeorgenstadt: Schwibbogenfest, Platz des Bergmanns, Nov. 30-Dec. 2 *one weekend*

Königsstein: Fortress Königstein, Dec. 2-3, 9-10, 16-17

Leipzig: Marktplatz, Nov. 27-Dec. 23

Marienberg: Marktplatz, Nov. 28 - Dec. 23

Schneeberg: City center, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Schwarzenberg: Old town, Dec. 7-16

Seiffen: Rathausplatz/Great Mountain Parade, Nov. 30-Dec. 23/Dec. 15

Thum: Neumarkt, Nov. 30-Dec. 2 *one weekend*

Zwickau: City center/Mountain Parade, Nov. 27-Dec. 23

SACHSEN-ANHALT

Halle (Saale): Nov. 27 - Dec. 23

Magdeburg: Alte Markt, Nov. 26-Dec. 30

Quedlinburg: Marktplatz, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16

Wittenberg: Marktplatz, Nov. 27-Dec. 22

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN & HAMBURG

Flensburg: Downtown, Nov. 26-Dec. 31 (closed Dec. 24-25)

Hamburg: Rathausmarkt/ Jungfernstieg/ St. Petri Church/ Gerhart-Hauptmann-Platz/ Gansemarkt/ Fleet market/ Santa Pauli/ Hamburg Winterdom, Nov. 22-Dec. 23/ Nov. 26- Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 24, 25)/ Nov. 26-Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 25)/ Nov. 26-Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 25)/ Nov. 27-Dec. 23/Nov. 27-Dec. 23/Nov. 23-Dec. 23/ Nov. 9-Dec. 9)

Kiel: City Center, Nov. 26-Dec. 23

Lübeck: Lubecker Rathaus, Nov. 26-Dec. 30

THÜRINGEN

Eisenach: Marktplatz, Dec. 1-16

Erfurt: Cathedral Square, Nov. 27-Dec. 22

Weimar: Marktplatz, Nov. 27-Jan. 9

HUNGARY

Budapest: Vorosmaty Square, Nov. 9-Jan. 1

ITALY

Aosta: Marche Vert Noel, Nov. 24-Jan. 6

Bolzano/Bozen: Piazza Walther, Nov. 26-Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25)

Bressanone/Brixen: Piazza Duomo, Nov. 23-Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25)

Brunico/Bruneck: Kronplatz, Nov. 23-Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25)

Candelara: City Streets, Nov. 24-25, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16

Chiusa/Klausen: Town Center, Nov. 30-Dec. 23

Merano/Meran: Town Center, Nov. 24- Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25)

Trento: Piazza Fiera, Nov. 19-Jan. 6 (closed Dec. 25)

Verona: Nov. 18-Dec. 26

Vipiteno/Sterzing: Alta Valle Isarco, Nov. 23-Jan. 6

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam: Lange Voorhout, Dec. 14-23

Deventer: Berkwartier, Dec. 15-16 *one weekend*

Dordrecht: City center, Dec. 14-16 *one weekend*

Gouda: Markt en omstreken, Dec. 14 *one weekend*

Valkenburg aan de Geul: Cave Markets, Nov. 16-Dec. 23

SPAIN

Barcelona: La Farga, Nov. 23-Jan. 6

Madrid: Plaza Mayor, Nov. 23- Dec. 31

SWEDEN

Göteborg: Liseberg, Nov. 16-18, 23-25, 29-30, Dec. 1-2, 5-9, 11-2-23, 26-30. (closed Dec. 3-4, 10, 24, 25)

Stockholm: Stortorget Square, Nov. 24- Dec. 23

SWITZERLAND

Basel: Barfüsserplatz and Münsterplatz, Nov. 22-Dec. 23

Bern: City Center, Dec. 1-23

Brienz: City Center, Dec. 1-2 *one weekend*

Lausanne: Various locations, Nov. 21-Dec. 31

Luzern: Various locations, Nov. 30-Dec. 19

Montreux: Various locations around Lake Geneva, Nov. 22-Dec. 24

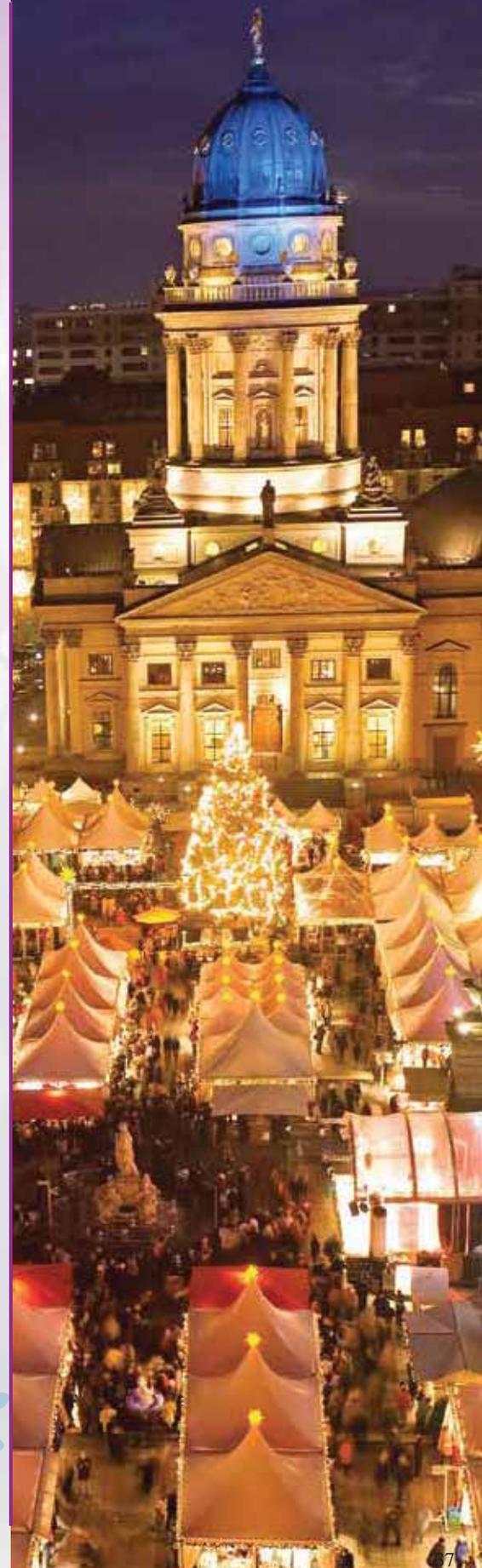
St. Gallen: Town Center, Nov. 29-Dec. 24

Veytaux: Chillon Castle, Dec. 1-16

Zurich: Main train stations, Nov. 23-Dec. 23

***Dates are subject to change. Always confirm dates and opening times on official tourism, city or event website. Most markets are closed or have reduced hours on holidays.*

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